

Three Negroes On Jury Panel In Roanoke

ROANOKE, Va., Jan. 17 (P).—
Three Negroes were on the jury
panel here today for the first time
in the history of Roanoke's Law
and Chancery Court to hear a
\$10,000 damage suit filed by a
Negro educator.

Dr. Elizabeth Durham, a member
of the Virginia State College
faculty, is using the Norfolk &
Western Railway, the Pullman
Co. and a conductor.

The educator contends her
health was impaired in January,
1949, when she was moved from
a sleeping car to a day coach, even
though she held a sleeping car
ticket.

A continuance was obtained at
the start of the first trial when Dr.
Durham's attorney — Martin A.
Martin of Richmond—objected to
the absence of Negroes from juries.

A supplemental list of Negro
jurors was compiled, and three
Negroes were among the 14 men
and summoned for today's trial.

Dr. Marion Harris Is First Negro Juror Of Nacogdoches

Informant: Houston, Texas

NACOGDOCHES — Dr. Marion Harris of Nacogdoches will serve on the February panel of the Nacogdoches County Grand Jury. According to the "The Daily Sentinel," a Nacogdoches paper, Dr. Harris is the first Negro to ever serve on a grand jury in that county.

Editor's note: This article appeared in January 8th issue of "The Daily Sentinel," a Nacogdoches paper.

For the first time in the history of Nacogdoches county, as well as records and memory serve, a Negro is included on the panel for a grand jury.

List of sixteen men who will be called for duty with the Second District Court in its winter term, P. Blake, District clerk. February 5, was opened by Bennett P. Blake, District clerk.

The action followed recent rulings by the Supreme Court of the United States in which a murder conviction in a Dallas trial court was reversed because there was no Negro on the grand jury indicting the defendant, who was a Negro. Ruling of the Supreme Court was explained to the jury commission which met in the fall by H. T. Brown of Rusk, district judge. No instruction on the matter was given by the judge, who merely read the decisions the Supreme Court handed down.

Harris is listed as No. 12 on the panel. Standard procedure in the selection of 12 men from the 16 is that the first 12 men who qualify serve as the grand jury. This procedure will guarantee that Harris will be included on the grand jury unless he presents adequate reason to be excused.

Judge Brown will be in Nacogdoches Saturday, January 13, to set the civil docket for the winter term of court. Attorneys having cases on the docket have been notified by Mr. Blake to be present Saturday so that all civil settings can be completed.

Listed on the panel of grand jurors are Mark Fuller of Martinsville, G. S. Pack of Chireno, George Tinkle of Garrison, Jesse Lee Dedman of Caro, W. V. Watt of Cushing,

D. L. Hancock of Appleby, John J. Rudisill of Nacogdoches, Robert N. Cason of Nacogdoches, J. D. Crawford of Etolle, A. L. Keeling, A. O. Routt of Nacogdoches, Marion Harris of Nacogdoches, Alton King of Nacogdoches, T. G. Telford of Nacogdoches, Jeff Grimes of Nacogdoches, Route 2, and J. M. Carswell of Cushing.

Members of the jury commission were Eric H. Green of Chireno, Aaron B. Cox of Nacogdoches, R. T. Bentley of Martinsville, Byford Bates of Cushing, and Dale Irwin of Garrison.

Wilmington Jurist



Mrs. Helen V. Holland, widow of Dr. Archibald Holland became the first colored person selected for a Wilmington, Del., jury last week. Mrs. Holland is a sewing instructor at the Howard Evening High School.

Two Norfolk Women Are Jury Duty "Firsts"

NORFOLK—Two local women this week became the first of their race ever to serve on a jury in the state of Virginia when Mrs. A. B. Green Sr., 1110 Berkley avenue, Norfolk, and Mrs. Dorothy D. Watson, of 2718 Magnolia street, Portsmouth, assisted in ruling that the late Miss Mary Way was not contemplating death when she gave a \$25,000 annuity to a close companion in 1947.

It was the first case of the precedent-setting jury in U. S. Federal District Court. The question the jury had to decide was whether the gift to Miss Mary Page Morris was made by 80-year-old Miss Way to avoid taxes in contemplation of death or whether it was given as a token of affection and for services rendered Miss Way by the recipient.

The verdict was returned here Tuesday in the case of the National Bank of Commerce, trustee for the estate of Miss Way, against the Collector of Internal Revenue for the Virginia district.

AS A RESULT, Stuart L. Crenshaw, Collector of Internal Revenue, must refund \$7,903 in federal estate taxes collected from the National Bank of Commerce against Miss Way's estate.

The jury in the case set two precedents. It consisted of four women, the first in this court ever to participate in the decision of a law suit. Two of the women were colored, the first women of their race to occupy a jury box in Virginia. White women, however, have been members of grand jury panels in the federal courts before.

The white women on the jury were Mrs. Joseph M. Commander, 1017 Shirley avenue, and Miss Rita Hofheimer, of the Beacon Bookshop.

ONE OF THE JURORS in the

case, Mrs. A. B. Green Sr., said she had been summoned for jury duty before, last November, but there were no cases to be tried the two days she was to have served. She was the only colored woman juror called at that time.

Women were selected in Richmond last fall for both grand and petit jury duty in the United States District Court. All were white, however.

State courts have not as yet selected any women to serve on juries.

22 1951

Arkansas

Negroes on Ark. Jury

Continued
BLYTHEVILLE, Ark.—A mixed jury of eight white men and four Negroes heard a portion of the state's evidence against Arthur N. Gray, 23, here last week. Gray was accused of first degree murder in the slaying of a 19-year-old white cab driver March 3.

Negroes On Jury At El Dorado

Continued
EL DORADO, Ark.—Negroes may serve on a jury at El Dorado, for the first time in Union County history.

Circuit Court Judge Gus Jones, Reynold's attorney, had asked that for the trial of Jim Ed Reynolds, a Negro charged with the murder of a white man.

Reynold's attorney had asked that the old panel be discharged under the terms of the 1945 amendment granting equal rights. No Negroes were on the first panel.

The trial was set for August 29.

SLAYER FACES LIFE TERM

First Negroes On Jury In Union County History

EL DORADO, Ark., Aug. 29. — (AP)—Jim Ed Reynolds, youthful Negro lumber mill worker, has been convicted by a Circuit Court jury of first-degree murder.

The jury, including three Negroes—the first time in Union County history that Negroes have served as jurors—deliberated 42 minutes Tuesday night before finding Reynolds guilty of fatally beating Ira Mitchell on July 8.

The slaying took place at Mitchell's home in Smackover.

Reynolds' punishment was fixed at life imprisonment in the state penitentiary.

22 1951

California

Door With No Keyhole Sends Cop To Prison

LOS ANGELES—Because the door of an alleged gambling establishment had no keyhole, Officer Barlan B. Harsha was sentenced to from one to 14 years in prison last week for perjury.

The sentence was set by Superior Court Judge Edwin L. Jefferson, California's only Negro jurist. The perjury charge was the outgrowth of a trial of an alleged bookie.

In testifying at the trial of the bookie whom he had arrested, Harsha declared under oath that he had peeped through the keyhole of a Central avenue shop and had seen the defendant accepting bets on race horses.

Attorney for the defendant told Judge Jefferson that the door to the place had no keyhole. The judge then ordered that the door be brought into the courtroom.

When the door was produced it had no keyhole and the judge found Harsha guilty of perjury.

22 1951

California

Negro Appointed To Grand Jury

FRESNO, Calif. — (ANP) — A Negro, Cecil C. Hinton, has been appointed for the first time to the Fresno County grand jury.

Hinton, a recognized civic leader is the director of the B Street Community center. He also is active in numerous other community projects.

Speaking of this appointment to the grand jury, Joseph H. Dixon Jr., president of the Fresno Branch NAACP, said:

"I feel that Mr. Hinton's appointment as the first Negro on a Fresno County grand jury is a milestone in progress here."

Negro Refuses Negro Jurors

CLEARWATER, Fla. —

Isaac Wright, charged with purse snatching, refused to have members of his own race sit on his jury last week.

Circuit Judge John U. Bird said it was the first time in his long experience that a Negro defendant had objected to another Negro passing judgement upon him.

The all-white jury which was finally selected to hear this case was unable to agree on a verdict and Judge Bird declared a mistrial.

The jury accepted by the state included one Negro. The judge told Wright, who had no lawyer, he might excuse as many as five of the six jurors.

After looking them over, Wright said, "I don't want that colored man on the jury."

The Negro juror was excused. By chance, however, the next person drawn was a Negro. Wright took the same stand and excused him also.

In the South

ORLANDO, Fla., Oct. 30—(AP)—Negroes are serving on an Orange County Grand Jury for the first time. Two of them, Charles Gray and Oscar J. Anderson were included in the panel organized Monday. State Atty. Murray Overstreet said he has no plans to call the Grand Jury into session immediately because he has a heavy calendar of criminal cases to prosecute.

22 1951

Florida

Negro Refuses Members of Own Race As Jurors in His Larceny Case Trial

CLEARWATER, Fla., April 25—(AP)—A Negro charged with purse snatching has refused to have members of his own race sit on his jury.

Circuit Judge John U. Bird said it was the first time in his long experience that a Negro defendant had taken this stand.

The all-white jury was unable to agree on a verdict and Judge Bird declared a mistrial for Isaac Wright.

The jury accepted by the state Monday included one Negro. Judge Bird told Wright, who had no lawyer, he might excuse as many as five of the six jurors.

"I don't want that colored man on the jury," Wright said.

The Negro juror was excused, but by chance the next person drawn also was a Negro. Wright excused him also.

Negro Serves On Grand Jury

A Negro member of the January-February Fulton County Grand Jury Mr. Robert Norwood, Sr., is serving also on a committee on investigation of the city and county school system.

Mr. Norwood is a prominent Atlanta contractor and resides at 2105 Forest Park Road, S. E. In addition to visitation of this special delegation to the several city and county schools, the group attended a session of State Legislature.

Put Negroes On Jury List, DeKalb Told

A court order instructing the DeKalb County Jury Commission to revamp trial and grand jury lists to include Negroes will be issued sometime next week, Superior Court Judge Frank Guess said Tuesday.

This means Negroes will be included in DeKalb jury boxes for the first time since the Reconstruction Era.

SUSTAINS PLEA

Judge Guess Tuesday sustained a "Scottsboro plea" by Aaron Robinson, 19-year-old Ellenwood Negro who was under indictment for rape of a white woman. The judge, in sustaining the motion, quashed the Grand Jury indictment of Robinson and declared null and void the present Grand Jury lists and traverse and petit Jury venue panels in DeKalb County.

The "null and void" order affects the trial and grand jury lists only in the Robinson case, Judge Guess explained. He said the present jury lists would be valid in other trials unless challenged in a specific case. The present Grand Jury will continue its work, he explained.

He added, however, that once Negroes are placed on jury lists, the issue is settled as to their serving in DeKalb County.

CITES RULING

"I am sorry this action had to come at a time when our Commission of its own volition was en-

deavoring to place the names of Negroes in jury boxes," Judge Guess said.

"The Georgia Supreme Court already has ruled on this question. The Georgia Supreme Court followed the United States Supreme Court in its decision, and for 71 years this plea could have been filed in this very court, but our lawyers respected our white jurors and felt they would give a defendant a fair trial," he added.

Dan Duke, Atlanta attorney whose case, "Crumb vs. the State," prompted the Georgia Supreme Court ruling, said he thought "about a third" of Georgia's counties now have Negroes in their jury boxes.

LEATHERS' VOW Solicitor Roy Leathers, recognizing that the court would have to sustain the Robinson plea, commented that "as long as I have strikes, it will be a long time before any Negroes sit on a jury here."

Jury Commission Chairman Fred Cannon said later he would not put anyone in the jury box unless he thought him qualified. He said the commission had considered three Negroes for jury duty in making up the present list, but none qualified.

When the court orders the new list, Commissioners will ask "civic leaders and Negro educators" to recommend Negroes that might qualify for jury duty, Cannon added.

Atlanta To Get Negro Jurors

ATLANTA — Superior Court Judge Frank Guess last week ordered DeKalb county to place the names of Negroes in its trial and grand jury boxes. No names of Negroes have been included since Reconstruction days.

He ordered the ruling after attorneys for Aaron Robinson, 19, charged with the rape of a white woman, filed a motion to quash an indictment on a plea challenging the all-white jurors. The motion was sustained.

Adding Insult To Injury

(From Atlanta Daily World)

DeKalb County Jury Commissioners were instructed to meet early this week to effectuate the two weeks' old order of Superior Court Judge Frank Guess to place the names of Negroes in jury boxes for the first time since Reconstruction Days in that county. The order came as a result of a petition, filed by the three Edwards Brothers, on behalf of 19 year-old Aaron Robinson, challenging his indictment on ground that no Negroes were on the Grand Jury which indicted him.

But, if we may be permitted to observe, they are proceeding on the wrong assumption. In the first place, Solicitor General Roy Leathers expresses the extraordinary position that "I don't know a darky (Negro) with the intelligence, character, honesty and integrity to serve on the jury." And then, not being satisfied with this insult to Negroes of Georgia as well as to those of DeKalb County, the Solicitor expressed his true colors when he added: "As long as I have got any strikes, there will have to be a lot of Negroes called for one of them to serve. I've got ten strikes and I'll use all of them on Negroes."

Thus, despite the mere theoretic conclusion to place the names of Negroes on the jury rolls, in intent and purpose there appears no genuine intentions to do much else besides. And therein lies the crux of the problem. In most sections of the Deep South, at least, officials start out with an attitude that because of the "Scottsboro" ruling, "we are under obligation to place the names of Negroes in the jury boxes, but in practice, that is as far as we intend to go. Accordingly, for all practical purposes, the Scottsboro decision has made little headway, insofar as enabling more and more Negroes to be called for service.

The other unfortunate assumption in the DeKalb situation lies in the directive to School Superintendent Jim Cherry to provide the Commissioners with a list of names of Negro teachers. That is a sharp departure from the routine practice in Georgia. In most counties of the State, teachers are generally excluded from such service for a number of good and sufficient reasons. In the first instance, most teachers are residents of other counties and communities, and precious few of them are property owners. Moreover, the law stipulates that the jury rolls be made up from among the taxpayers, meaning property owners. And despite what the Solicitor may think, there are many Negroes in DeKalb county who can qualify for service. And to hold that he does not know any Negroes with the character and intelligence to serve reflects an attitude of either complete ignorance or prejudice. In either instance, such a concept is wrong in principle, wrong in outlook and wrong in fact. What is more, what chance have Negroes in a court with such a philosophy as its guiding principle?

Two Negroes On Fulton County Grand Jury List

Two Atlanta Negroes are serving on the current Fulton Grand Jury, which began its duties Monday of handling issues in Fulton County. Officials reported that one of their main duties will be to hear cases involving the remainder of the poison liquor deaths if time permits. Five indictments have been returned against bootlegger John "Fats" Hardy, each charging him with two counts of murder. The two Negroes listed on the present Grand Jury are: Mr. C. L. Harper and Lucius Mitchell.

10 Negroes in DeKalb Venire

The DeKalb County Jury Commission Thursday eliminated all but 10 of some 100 Negroes who had been recommended for jury duty on grounds they were not on the tax list.

Fred Cannon, commission chairman, said it will seek more recommendations and will meet at 9 a. m. Wednesday to consider other possible qualified Negro jurors. Negroes are being put into DeKalb jury boxes on an order of DeKalb Superior Court.

Intimidate Minister Named First Foreman Of Cleveland Grand Jury

CLEVELAND, O. — A few days after he had been named the first Negro of a grand jury in Cleveland, and had announced his intention of cleaning up vice and rackets in the city, two sets of bones very similar to human hands were found on the steps of Rev. Wade Hampton McKinney's Antioch Baptist church.

Finding of the bones created much excitement in Cleveland for several days. The were believed to have been a form of intimidation to the fiery, crusading pastor of Cleveland's largest church, who has been a known enemy of numbers and other forms of gambling for many years.

Taken to the coroner, the bones were finally ruled 'not human.' Indignant citizens, however, lodged complaints with the police department and the mayor's office demanding the arrest and punishment of the persons guilty of the attempted intimidation of the minister.

Under Cleveland laws, the grand jury makes recommendations which result in arrest and prosecution of lawless elements. Two days before the bones were placed on the church steps Rev. McKinney had announced that his jury would call in the city's safety director, the chief of police and other officials who had figured in a Kefauver investigation of Cleveland rackets a few weeks ago.



REV. W. H. McKINNEY AND JUDGE SILBERT

22 1951

South Carolina

On U.S. Grand Jury



Columbia
Hezekiah Allen, Charleston businessman, was one of four District of South Carolina, Negroes serving on the federal grand jury for the Eastern which was in session here Monday.



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CHATTANOOGA, TENN. - (SNS) -

NEGROES SERVE ON DEATH JURY—Another first in Hamilton County jury history was recorded November 23 when five Negroes were selected to serve as jurors in a murder trial held in Judge Raulston Schoolfield's court. *Birmingham, Ala.*

On trial for first degree murder was Pless Kelly, 49-year-old Negro yardman charged with the June 4 stabbing of Mildred Wooten, 36, also colored. *P. 3*

The Negro jurors, sitting in judgment with seven regular and one extra white jurors, are Hubert Hale, Jerome Higgins, Frank William White, Lawrence C. Bishop and Aaron Lawrence.

Judge Schoolfield, in commenting on the jurors said, "To the best of my knowledge this is the first time Negroes have ever served in a Hamilton County murder jury—with or without whites." He added, "I have made arrangements with the sheriff to provide meals for all of the jurors." According to jury laws, only men and women jurors may be separated for food and lodging, the judge pointed out.

The defendant was represented by Attorney George W. Chamlee. The jury was out forty minutes and brought back a verdict of guilty. Pless Kelly was sentenced to 20 years in the penitentiary.

Virginia Jurors Jail White Man

BRISTOL, Va. — Negroes served on a jury here for the first time last week and precedent was shattered all the way because it was a white man who was on trial.

The Negro jurors were Raymond Martin, a barber, and Conley W. Nelson, a retired railroad worker.

The jury convicted William Robert Shepherd, Jr., of Bristol, Tenn., of a breaking and entering charge and sentenced him to prison for one year and fined him \$150.

Six Norfolk Women Are Called For Jury Duty

NORFOLK—Six colored women are among the sixteen Norfolk women who will be called upon to serve on juries in Virginia courts during the coming month, it was revealed by jury lists released this week.

All of the colored prospective jurors drawn will be asked to serve in Corporation Court Part II, which will try criminal cases during the month.

Called to serve in Corporation Court, Part II, were Mrs. Clyde Boone, 2701 Myrtle avenue and Mrs. Alma Givens, 2400 Corporew avenue.

THOSE CALLED for service in Corporation Court are Miss Lillie Ellis, 969 Rugby street; Mrs. H. B. Hucles, 1519 Calvert street; Mrs. Mildred Jones, 829 Reservoir street; and Mrs. F. D. Nance of 1536 Dun-gee street.

A total of 900 Norfolk women were sent queries concerning their availability for service in the above-named courts plus Circuit Court and the Court of Law and Chancery. Four hundred and fifty of them accepted.

The names of three women were drawn for Circuit Court duty. The list has not yet been prepared for the Court of Law and Chancery.

ALL OF THE WOMEN called are housewives with the exception of Mrs. Nance, who is a member of the faculty of the Lott Carey school, and Mrs. Jones, who is a tical nurse.

Women Jurors For Norfolk Corporation Court Duty



MRS. F. D. NANCE



MRS. C. M. BOONE



MRS. LILLIE ELLIS



MRS. ALMA GIVENS



MRS. MILDRED JONES

The five Norfolk residents shown above were selected this week for jury duty in Corporation Court Part II. They are among 16 Norfolk women who were listed as prospective jurors for the Corporation Courts and the Circuit Court. The list for the Court of Law and Chancery has not been prepared.

They are Mrs. F. D. Nance, Mrs. Clyde M. Boone, Mrs. Lillie Ellis, Mrs. Alma Givens and Mrs. Mildred Jones. Mrs. H. B. Hucles, the sixth juror selected, was not available for a photo.

Williamsburg Calls Negro Women Jurors

WILLIAMSBURG — Mrs. Alice Morning and Mrs. Louise Harris became the first colored women to be summoned for jury duty in the history of Williamsburg when they were notified Saturday that they had been selected for jury duty in the James City County Circuit Court.

Both are residents of Williamsburg.